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## THE HOLY EUCHARIST—II

(Translated from the French by the Editor)

Our Lord instituted the Holy Eucharist because he wished to remain with men until the end of the world, not only through the presence of his Spirit, but also of his body, and precisely of that body which was crucified and raised for them, that body from which their new life flows, as water from a spring. To reveal the theological riches of this mystery we intend to show that it brings about a *presence* : a presence in time first of all, namely that time between the past of the Cross and the future of our heavenly glory ; a presence in space also, namely, a presence which *affects our bodily senses* ; but more than that, a *physical and real presence* whereby we receive the Lord's body itself. And since this risen body is the nucleus of the new world, this mystery brings about a *collective presence* where we meet in Christ the whole of his body which is the Church. After considering these different aspects, we shall show in conclusion how this sacrament contains the *sacrifice of Christ*, his sacrifice which is also ours, and how this sacrifice is prolonged upon our altars by a *permanent presence*.

I *Present here and now.* At first sight this might seem surprising : does not the rite suggest rather a remembrance of the past ? 'Do this in memory of me' : we commemorate the death of Our Lord, an event which took place two thousand years ago ; how can we speak of his being present except in our memories of him ? It is true that Our Lord also spoke of the new wine which he would drink with his disciples in the Kingdom of the Father ; but this leads us towards a future which only exists in expectation, that future when we shall be reunited with him after the *parousia*. Between Our Lord's departure and his return there is only his absence.

As a matter of fact this is the impression given by the way the Supper is celebrated in certain Protestant circles. They recall that Christ died for us and rejoice at the prospect of rejoining him some day ; but in the meantime he is not there. The tension existing between the past and the future has even suggested a duality of sources to certain critics. According to them there were in the primitive Church

two different ways of celebrating the Lord's Supper ; in Jerusalem it was a joyful meal, taken with the risen Christ, and a meal during which they prepared themselves for his imminent return. But among the communities founded by St Paul, such as that at Corinth, it was a funeral meal by which they commemorated the death of the Lord, and in which, according to a rite borrowed from the Hellenistic mysteries, they believed they were sharing in his sacrificed body. In the first case then, the Lord's Supper was a simple fraternal banquet with no sacramental value, which was orientated towards the future, and in which they ate with the Lord ; in the other, it was a mystic rite of Greek origin, which was orientated towards the past and in which they ate the Lord. These two concepts were later joined and the result was already to be seen in the gospel accounts of the institution, where the perspective of the joyful eschatological future (Mark 14:25 par.) is found alongside the memorial of the past in the bread-body and the wine-blood (Mark 14:22-4 par.).

This ingenious hypothesis will not bear scrutiny, neither from the exegetical nor from the theological point of view. The exegesis of the texts runs contrary to such a dichotomy. The two aspects thus opposed are in fact already combined in each of the two sources. To the words 'proclaim the death of the Lord' Paul immediately adds 'until he come' : in other words he does not think of the past without reference to the future ; on the other hand, the 'breaking of bread' in the earliest Jerusalem community cannot be reduced simply to a feast of joyful expectation, for it is closely associated in the Acts with the apostolic *kerygma* in which the Cross and Resurrection form the central point ; thus the future is not separated from the past.

In addition to these exegetical facts there is the theological truth of primary importance, that far from being in opposition, the past and the future of Christ, and in him of Christian salvation, meet in a present which inherits the combined riches of them both. The past of Christ is not terminated like that of a creature who only belongs to this world's time ; it continues in a present here and now, which stems from the new time inaugurated by the Resurrection. Not only is God's action of granting pardon to mankind because of the Cross, as eternal as God Himself, and transcending all the centuries of human time ; but also the action of Christ, though confined from one point of view within the progress of human history, surpasses it from another, because it brings the old era of this history to an end and inaugurates a new one. Through the Resurrection, the life and death of Our Lord overflows into a new world whose eternal present shares in a certain way the eternity of God. 'Christ once risen from the dead, dies no more ; death no more wields power over him. His

death was death to sin, once for all ; but his life is life to God' (Rom. 6:9-10). Risen from the dead Christ lives by a new life in which his past remains present. The Epistle to the Hebrews shows him entering the heavenly sanctuary through the veil of his flesh 'in order that he might now appear before the face of God on our behalf' (Heb. 9:24) ; for in virtue of his unchangeable priesthood and his sacrifice offered once for all, he is 'always living to intercede on behalf of sinners' (Heb. 7:25).

Christ's present is enriched by the past ; it is also enriched by the future. The new era which he inaugurated is the eschatological era, the era of the final times which will change no more, and in which mankind, reconciled with God, will enjoy for ever His love and company, in an eternal present. This era was begun by Christ and for Christ ; Christ, 'the first-fruits of those that are asleep' (1 Cor. 15:20), the risen Christ, has already taken his place in this new and final state, to which all who share in his salvation are called, in order that they may join him there.

In actual fact, this eschatological present in which the past and the future meet, is not yet fully realised, except in the case of Christ (and his mother, by virtue of the Assumption). The rest of men, even the faithful, are still hemmed in by the changing circumstances of the old order. Nevertheless the faithful, by their union with Christ, already in a certain sense have a share in the new order and the new era which he has established. One part of them is already dead to sin and risen with Christ, whilst the other is still subject to sin and condemned to death (cf. Rom. 8:10-13 ; Eph. 2:5-6) ; this is a violent, paradoxical, 'amphibious' state, which is illustrated by the 'You are dead . . . put to death then . . .' of Col. 3:3,5. Now this contact with Christ, which already places them partly in the eschatological era, is established by faith and by the sacraments of faith, of which the Eucharist is the centre.

The Christ with whom we come into contact and whom we actually receive in the eucharistic banquet, is without doubt the Christ who died for us two thousand years ago, and he is the Christ who will raise us up and glorify us some day in the future, a day known to God alone ; but he is the Christ who now lives with the Father, in possession of all the riches of his salvation and promises of glory. By the sacramental contact we enter in a mysterious fashion this present of salvation already realised, and we really share in it. We share in that sacrifice which Christ, after having offered it 'once for all,' offers at the present moment and always. We share in the Messianic feast already really begun, for the Kingdom of God where it is celebrated is itself already begun : it is the Church, grouped round the risen Master. Jesus had

already said : 'The Kingdom of God is among you' (Luke 17:21). This is particularly true after his Resurrection, and we may surmise that Luke is thinking of this Kingdom which is the Church when he tells us Our Lord said : 'I shall eat of this Pasch no more . . . I shall drink no more of the fruit of the vine until the Kingdom of God be come' (Luke 22:16, 18), and then insists on the meals which the risen Master took with his disciples (Luke 24:30, 41-43 ; Acts 1:4). As in the case of the first disciples, it is Christ, dead and risen again, and alive at this very moment, whom we meet at the eucharistic Supper.

2 *Present to the bodily senses.* This is another trait which we must underline, for its necessity does not appear at first sight. Could not Our Lord have remained near us simply by the spiritual presence of faith ? Could not his word, received into our minds, have assured us of his permanent presence ? That, at least, is how it is viewed by those who, in practice, misunderstand the sacramental order, and allow of a contact with Christ and his salvation through faith alone. But this would not have been human. Man is a being endowed with bodily senses ; his soul lives in a body. To establish real contact it is necessary to reach the body as well as the soul. Words are themselves in some measure dependent for their effect upon the senses, for ideas are only presented to the mind by way of sounds which play upon the ear. And even this is not sufficient to satisfy our needs ; hence words are accompanied by expressive gestures or by symbols. God knows the ways of those He has created, and in His condescension He accommodates Himself to them. He revealed Himself by means of actions as much as words. A striking illustration of this is found in what we call the 'types' of the Old Testament. He did not simply tell Israel that He was their saviour : He saved them by rescuing them from Egypt 'with outstretched arm' ; and He did not simply rescue them from Egypt : He made this act of salvation perceptible to the senses by the blood of the pascal lamb smeared on the doors, by the tables of the Law written by His hand, by the bronze serpent set up in the desert.

Our Lord, the supreme expression of God's nearness as far as it can be perceived, did not act differently. In his speech he used images and parables. He touched the bodies of those he healed, even using such commonplace methods as saliva mixed with earth. It was by taking hold of the whip or by prostrating upon the ground that he taught his disciples the respect due to the divine Majesty. When, therefore, he takes bread and wine in order to attach to them the permanent presence of his sacrifice, he does so to make this presence perceptible, tangible, striking. The words which explain the signi-

ficance of his death will remain in the minds of his disciples, and of their disciples after them ; but to sustain these words in a tangible way there will be this bread and this wine which are seen with the eyes, grasped by the hands, tasted on the palate ; they will provide man with a more complete possession of the gift that has been made to him. Yet this is not all. There is more, much more, in this bread and wine.

3 *Physically present.* The bread and wine here are not merely symbols. They are symbols, but they are something more. They are really, although in a mysterious manner, the body and blood of Jesus Christ. To establish this, it is not enough to stress the form of Christ's words : 'This is my body' or 'this is my blood,' for philology would not adequately support such an argument. In the first place we must remember that Our Lord said these words in Aramaic, and in this language the copula is not expressed ; Joachim Jeremias<sup>1</sup> proposes for the original words : *den bisri* (this my flesh) and *den idhmi* (this my blood). Secondly, the copula which is understood need not necessarily signify a real identity. In such phrases as 'the one who sows the good seed is the Son of Man' ; 'the field is the world' ; 'the good grain are the members of the kingdom' (Matt. 13:37-8), the verb is clearly not intended to mean more than 'signifies,' 'represents.' It would therefore be possible to understand here, as some actually do, 'This represents my body ; this represents my blood.' But there are other reasons which demand something more in this particular case.

First of all the value of bread and wine as a symbolic expression is not sufficient to explain their use here. In a parable, spoken or acted, an abstract idea, or something real but absent, is made clear by a concrete image or something real that is to hand : the sowing of seed, the field, the treasure, the leaven, the lamp, really help the mind, through their well-known role in daily life, to grasp those more mysterious realities which are the Kingdom of God and the teaching of Our Lord. But here, things are quite different. Our Lord speaks of his body which he is going to give for his brethren, of his blood which he is about to shed ; there is nothing more concrete and more immediate ; in what way would the bread on the table and the wine in the cup help to convey this ? It is possible to point out after the event—we have already done so ourselves<sup>2</sup>—that the red wine flowing from the crushed grape, may evoke the blood flowing from the body ; or again that the bread broken into pieces can repre-

<sup>1</sup> *The Eucharistic Words of Jesus*, Oxford, 1955, pp. 140 f

<sup>2</sup> 'The Holy Eucharist—I,' *Scripture* viii, 4 (Oct. 1956), p. 103

sent the body, broken and torn. The writers of the Church went further along these lines and found, for example, in the bread made from many ears of wheat and ground into flour, a beautiful symbol of the Christians whom Christ unites with himself through his passion into the one host which he offers to the Father. These more or less subtle allegories can be applied to the bread and wine used in the Eucharist, but they do not give it its deep significance. Jesus did not use these things as illustrations which made clear his coming sacrifice ; far from helping of themselves to explain the death of the body and the shedding of the blood, it is precisely the bread and wine which need explaining by means of the former.

The eucharistic bread and wine, therefore, do not immediately strike the mind as symbols ; their immediate appeal is to the body as food. It is as food that they first claim our interest. It is not an idea or instruction that they are to convey to those who partake of them, but a very concrete reality, the body and the blood of the Lord. This is precisely the concrete and realist plane on which Christian salvation is found, and it is important to insist on this, for this aspect is not always appreciated as much as it ought. The salvation of Christ is concerned with the body as much as the soul. This is an elementary truth which we think we know perfectly well ; but it has not in practice the significance it ought to have, due to the Greek mode of thought we have to some extent inherited. In Greek thought, influenced by Plato, the body is for the soul nothing but a prison, something bad in itself ; the soul's salvation depends on getting rid of it. The Greek idea of immortality only concerns the soul, freed at last of its miserable burden. Many Christians unconsciously think somewhat along these lines, not indeed that they deny the dogma of the resurrection of the body, but the latter seems very distant to them, and in the meantime they are none too clear on what place to give to this troublesome companion the body, in their striving after holiness. Often they regard it as incurably bad ; they reconcile themselves to the inevitable and let it sin ; or else they wish to master it and therefore have recourse to an excessive asceticism. In both cases the body is not given its due place, a wholesome and a holy place in the work of salvation ; it appears by the side of the soul like a poor relation ; we dare not think of it when it is a question of grace. We speak of 'saving our souls,' or of 'saving souls,' and seemingly forget that they dwell in bodies. Does not the formula used these days in the distribution of Holy Communion say '*custodiat animam tuam* : may the body of Our Lord guard thy *soul*' ? It would be better to say, as in the Dominican rite : *custodiat te* : guard *thee* : i.e. the whole man, soul and body. This failure to understand the importance of the body is even to be detected

in the way in which some Christians understand the Resurrection of Christ: they see in this triumph of the flesh over death a personal compensation, a reward richly earned through torments generously borne; after such humiliations was it not fitting the body thus sacrificed should experience glory? These ideas are very narrow, and without being altogether false remain incomplete.

Biblical anthropology and the idea of salvation which it entails, are quite different. In it the body is not pictured as an accidental companion, still less as something intrinsically bad. It is an essential element of man, created at the same time as the soul and as good as it. It is sin which came to disrupt this harmony, affecting the soul as much as the body; it separated the one from the other by an interior disorder to be made complete by the total separation which is death. But this is a violent state, for which the soul is to be held responsible, not the material nature of the body, and which will have to come to an end if man is to recover his pristine integrity. In Biblical revelation, the only genuine 'salvation' is that of the soul *with its body*; the one cannot be saved without the other. It is even going too far when, under pressure of language, we speak of them as two distinct parts. Actually man is his soul, and man is his body, in Semitic and Biblical thought. They are two complementary and inseparable aspects of the one concrete being. This way of thinking, which is Semitic and not Greek, is essential if we are to understand the Incarnation and Redemption, and also the sacramental dispensation. The Word did not take a human body simply to communicate with men at a level determined by the bodily senses. It was also, and indeed primarily, to take in hand the whole man, body and soul, and completely refashion him, body and soul. By yielding up his soul upon the Cross, Our Lord put to death the 'flesh of sin' with which he was clothed (Rom. 8:3; cf. 2 Cor. 5:21; Col. 1:22); by rising from the tomb he is the New Man whose soul and body are penetrated by the Spirit of the eschatological era (1 Cor. 15:44-5). In him who is the head of the new human race, the body is regenerated as much as the soul, and without it nothing would have been accomplished: 'If Christ be not risen, your faith is vain; you are still in your sins' (1 Cor. 15:17).

When then, he communicates his life to the faithful, it is their bodies as much as their souls which he unites with himself, in order to recreate them. It is his body as well as his soul which he puts in contact with theirs in order to make them share in his 'passage' from death to life. The 'grace' of Christ is his concrete life, that life which shines forth in his glorified body as well as in his glorified soul, and that life which he pours into the souls and bodies of those whom he unites to himself. From this it is understandable why Christ,

in order to establish such a contact and to exercise such an influence reaching man even in his body, uses these perceptible means, these physical means which we call sacraments. Salvation comes by faith and by the sacraments of faith ; faith alone would have sufficed for disembodied souls, but the sacraments of faith are necessary if the body which supports the soul is to be reached at its own level. Notice that we are concerned here with something different ; previously we spoke of ways of expressing things, of ways of enlightening the intelligence through the perception of the senses. Here it is precisely a question of transferring the new, recreated, pure life of the risen body of Christ to the contaminated flesh of the sinner. This demands a different contact from that of the Spirit ; it demands a bodily contact, a physical contact which works in its own fashion. Such a contact by its very nature escapes the clear grasp of the intelligence ; it is something experienced rather than capable of definition. But it is none the less real and indispensable. To bring it about Our Lord uses sacraments. Whether it be through the water of baptism or the oil of confirmation, whether it be through the tears of contrition and the gesture of absolution, in each of the sacraments his glorified and spiritual body comes into contact with our sinful body and heals it along with the soul which dwells in it. In the Eucharist, the central sacrament, it is not such or such an action of the body of Christ which has an effect upon us, but the body itself in its plenitude as the source of grace, which comes into us ; it is not through a more or less superficial and ephemeral contact, but through the most intimate and lasting way there can be in this life : the assimilation of food. Our Lord does more than wash us with purifying water, or anoint us with strengthening oil ; he nourishes us with his flesh. This demands that the bread and wine which we receive should be truly the flesh and blood of the Lord.

4 *Really present.* There is no doubt that the first Christians understood it in this way, and in particular the theologians Paul and John, whose teaching is part of divine revelation. After having quoted the account of the institution, Paul adds a realistic comment : 'That is why whoever eats the bread or drinks the Lord's cup unworthily, will have to answer for the body and blood of the Lord . . . for he who eats and drinks, eats and drinks his own condemnation, if he does not recognise the body therein' (1 Cor. 11:27, 29). The fourth gospel is even more categorical : 'If you do not eat the flesh of the Son of Man and drink his blood, you will not have life in you. . . . For my flesh is truly food and my blood truly drink. He who eats my flesh and drinks my blood remains in me and I in him' (John 6:53-57).

56). We must not pervert this realism into a gross materialism. The sacrament is nothing without faith, and the flesh of Christ would be nothing without the Spirit that dwells in it. Jesus himself adds : 'It is the Spirit that vivifies, the flesh counts for nothing' (John 6:63). It is the 'spiritual' or 'pneumatic' body of the risen Christ which is the channel of life ; it is he whom we must put on (1 Cor. 15:49). But whilst it differs in some way from the 'earthly' or 'psychic' body received from Adam, which Christ made to perish upon the Cross, this spiritual body of the glorified Christ is none the less the same body, transformed from corruption to incorruption, from weakness to strength, from ignominy to glory (1 Cor. 15:42-4). It is a spiritualised body, but still real, which could be touched (Luke 24: 39-40 ; John 20:27), and it is in this state that it is found in the bread in order to be given to us.

'How can this thing be ?' we would ask with Nicodemus. How can bread and wine become the body and blood of the Lord ? It is a mystery of faith ; we believe it because we believe in the Word of the Lord. He tells us that this is his body, that this is his blood, and we have just seen that his intention and the nature of his salvation cannot be satisfied by a merely symbolic representation. If he wishes this bread to give us really his body, he has the power to bring this about. His Word is powerful and creative. His words at the Last Supper are not an announcement but a decision. He does not merely state that the bread is his body ; he decrees that this must come to pass, and that it has come to pass. His speech does not come after the event, it brings the event to pass, by giving to the bread and wine a new value. We have pointed out that the president of the Jewish pasch commented upon the significance of the bitter herbs and the lamb, and thus gave these foods a real value they had not had before, so that when the guest ate them, he really shared in the deliverance of long ago, and enjoyed the benefits which flowed from it.<sup>1</sup> The efficacy of Our Lord's words yields nothing to the realism of this Biblical rite ; it far surpasses it, for the object of the commemoration is of a completely new order. The elements which the new rite uses are no longer simply accidental details connected with a divine intervention, and called to mind in order to help revive it ; they are the essentials of a new and definitive intervention, the very substance of the sacrifice which redeemed the world, and their presence must be renewed in a real way, in order to reach the guests, body as well as soul.

Is it possible to scrutinise this mystery further, and try to explain it to the rational mind ? It was inevitable that this attempt should

<sup>1</sup> *loc. cit.* pp. 101, 105-6

be made, and the effort is legitimate. With the help of philosophy it has been said that the 'substance' of the bread and wine was changed into the substance of the body and the blood, whilst the appearance or 'accidents' remained the same. This formulation is valid and the Church has sanctioned it by speaking of 'transubstantiation.' Nevertheless we must not forget the fact that even these philosophical notions are not free from mystery in this context. What they mean in the end is that the bread and wine, consecrated by the words of Christ, in a certain sense remain as they were in the old order of things; but on the other hand they become something more, as a result of their being elevated to the new order. What they are now so transcends what they were before that this loses its significance. In their new situation within the eschatological era, to which the whole of the sacramental dispensation belongs, they become the very body of Christ that died and was raised to life. The traditional dogmatic formula is expressed in terms of a philosophy of natures, and it has its value; nevertheless it is lawful to rethink and deepen it in terms of Biblical thought, which is more clearly understood today. Biblical thought is concerned rather with existence and its transition from the old era of sin and death to the era of salvation and life. This transition which Our Lord made first in his own person, from the Cross to the morning of Easter, he brings to pass in the bread and wine, in order that through these he may bring it to pass in those who share them with faith.

5 *A collective presence.* When we receive Christ we do not receive him alone. In accordance with the design of God he carries in himself the whole of humanity of which he is the new head. By clothing himself in our 'body of flesh' he assumed all the descendants of the first Adam, led astray by sin, in order to punish them in his person upon the Cross and thus reconcile them with the Father (Col. 1:22); when he rose again on the morning of Easter as the second Adam, created anew by God, the whole of the new humanity came out with him from the tomb, as a regenerated stock, just and holy (Rom. 5:12-19; Cor. 15:45-9; Eph. 4:22-4). In him was reunited all that sin had divided; sinners were reconciled not only with God, but also with each other. Thus St Paul says, apropos of what he regarded as the two great divisions of mankind, namely Jews and Gentiles: 'Christ is our peace, he who of the two (Jewish and pagan worlds) has made one single people, destroying the barrier which separated them, in his flesh suppressing hate, this law of precepts with its ordinances, in order to make in himself the two into one single new man, to make peace and to reconcile them both with God, in one single body,

through the Cross ; in his person he has slain hate' (Eph. 2:14-16). To understand this we must remember the very concrete realism of the Incarnation : the humanity of Christ, soul and body, is like a melting-pot in which God has recast His work ; it is like the clay from which He has remoulded His 'new creature.' In it all men who are saved find themselves, body and soul, closely united in the same new life.

But however perfect and final it may be, this work of redemption could not be accomplished in Our Lord except as in its principle, in its germ. Precisely because it is concrete, it still needs to be applied to all individual men, to successive generations through time and space. The risen Christ must touch every man who comes into this world, as formerly he touched the sick and the sinners of Palestine ; his most holy soul and his divinity must touch the bodies and souls of those he saves through the intermediary of his glorified body. We saw that he does this through faith and the sacraments of faith. By physical contact he unites the faithful to himself, even their bodies, and 'incorporates' them into himself. He makes of them the 'members' of his body. This famous expression of St Paul (1 Cor. 6:15 ; 12:27 ; Eph. 5:30) is not simply a metaphor borrowed from the classical comparison of the 'social body' ; on the contrary it must be taken in a most realistic sense, and its real source lies in the doctrine we have been recalling<sup>1</sup> : Christians are the members of Christ because their union with him joins their bodies to his body in the same risen life, still hidden as far as they are concerned, but already completely real (Col. 3:1-4).

Consequently the body of Christ, his personal body, crucified and raised up again, bears within itself the bodies of the brethren whom he forms to his image (Rom. 8:29). The implications of this for the Eucharist are clear. Since this sacrament gives us the body of Christ, it unites us by that very fact to all our brethren whom it bears within itself. Already St Paul taught this : 'The bread which we break, is it not participation in the body of Christ ? Since there is but one bread, we, all of us, form one single body, for we all share in this one bread' (1 Cor. 10:16-17). It is this eucharistic body of the Lord which was first called the 'mystical body,' and it is because it consummates the union of Christians with Christ and with one another that the expression was afterwards applied to the Church.<sup>2</sup> In this eucharistic body we meet our brethren, united by the love of Christ, and that is why the Eucharist is the sacrament of Charity, its source

<sup>1</sup> cf. P. Benoit : 'Corps, tête et plérôme dans les Épîtres de la captivité,' *Revue Biblique*, 1936, pp. 5-44

<sup>2</sup> cf. *loc. cit.* p. 10, with the reference to the writings of P. de Lubac there quoted

and its nourishment. In this physical, penetrating, intimate contact which it brings about, we assimilate both the strength and knowledge to love Christ wholly, him and his Father, and also the strength and knowledge to love the rest of mankind as he loves them, with his own heart. Through this sacrament the bonds of union are forged between all those who are united with him. And since this union rests upon the physical basis of our bodies it covers those mysterious exchanges where the suffering and death of one can satisfy in place of his brother.

6 *The sacrifice of the Church and an abiding presence.* These two final characteristics follow from all that we have just said. We realise that the Eucharist contains the sacrifice of Christ, since it contains the body and blood of Christ in the very act of his immolation. That it contains Christ's sacrifice here and now we have concluded from the eschatological time into which Christ has entered. We are thus justified in saying that the Mass is a sacrifice which renews the sacrifice of the Cross upon our altars : Christ is there, 'always living to intercede on (our) behalf' (Heb. 7:25). Can we go further and say that the Mass adds something to the Cross ? Protestants reproach Catholics for doing this, but their reproach is not justified ; it is, however, important to see why.

In one sense it is certain that the Mass adds nothing to the Cross. It is the same sacrifice which was already perfect in its historical realisation. In contrast to the priests of the old covenant, who had to renew continually their insufficient sacrifices, Christ suffered 'once for all, at the end of time . . . to abolish sin by his sacrifice' (Heb. 9:26). The Church, therefore, does not renew her liturgical sacrifice in the manner of the Jews. And yet she renews it, by the very order of her Master ; there must be a reason for this. From this angle, which must be accurately understood, it becomes lawful to say that the Mass adds something to the Cross, and it does this in two ways.

First of all it adds to it a concrete application, in time and space, the necessity of which we have already explained. The sacrifice of Christ merited to an infinite degree the benefits of pardon and life, needed for the salvation of mankind from the beginning to the end of the world ; yet it is necessary for these benefits to be communicated to each and everyone, in the time and place of his own particular life. The Mass distributes these treasures, it releases this life-giving stream, for the small community grouped around the altar. Nothing is added to what flows from the spring, but a canal is made which enables the life-giving waters to reach to the very end of human time and space. Nothing is added to the action and words of Christ, except

the action and words of one of his ministers, which only avail because Christ makes use of them ; through them it is still he who acts.

Something else is added, which we must not be afraid to recognise, for it is admirable and detracts in no way from the absolute sovereignty of the one Priest. This is the offering of the Church. It is the active contribution to the sacrifice by the priest who offers it, and the faithful who communicate or assist at it. Their prayers and their own sacrifices, sinners as they are, add nothing to the efficacy of the Cross ; this much is clear. And yet they join to Christ's work a human participation which he desires. If he offered his love and acts of expiation in place of theirs, which sin made valueless, it was not to suppress them but to give them value. Now that he has accomplished his work he does not wish to apply its benefits to them without their co-operation. That is why he gives to his Church not only his body and blood, but with them the whole of his sacrifice : in order that she may dispose of it and by its renewal associate with it all the sacrifices of her children. These sacrifices will add nothing, of course, to the one sacrifice of Our Lord ; on the contrary they will receive from it everything of value they can have ; but thus enriched, they will help in the sacramental application by allowing this saving contact which cannot be established without the active response of the redeemed to their Redeemer. This is the significance of the offering made at Mass ; when she presents to God the elements for the sacrifice, the Church offers to God through the hands of the priest, the faithful who have provided them ; by accepting these humble gifts and making of them his Body and blood, Christ incorporates into his sacrifice the sacrifices which these gifts symbolise. And he makes them share in this total sacrifice, with which he deigns to associate his Church, when he gives back to them the gifts they offered, but now transformed in his hands. The divine condescension which characterises the whole plan of redemption, and which associates man in the working out of his own salvation, is seen here in a particularly striking way. Why must a misguided anxiety concerning the respect due to the divine autonomy and transcendence, lead some to misunderstand the riches of this theological truth ?

The gift of his body and blood which Christ has made to his followers brings with it a final consequence : their abiding presence among us. Certainly they are given us in the act of their being sacrificed : and that is why Protestants only admit their presence (more or less symbolically) in the bread and wine at the very moment of the action by which they are given. The sacramental realism of the Catholic Faith does not allow such a way of thinking. Christ does not take bread and wine as ephemeral modes of expression ; he gives

them a new being, which derives from the eschatological era and has its permanence. Doubtless it is to commemorate his sacrificial act, but this act has become in him a reality which ceases no more : his body and blood have become an offering constantly offered, constantly accepted and constantly radiating life. The share in the old order of things which it still has, prevents the sacrament from taking on fully this character of eschatological perpetuity. If the frail support of the bread and wine disappears, either by communion or by corruption, the presence of the body and blood by that very fact ceases. But as long as this support continues, the presence is maintained. Christ has donated this presence to the Church with a liberality such as is found in all his gifts. Not only can the Church renew the Supper as often as she wishes, but she can also make use of it as she desires. Thus it is that, whilst scrupulously respecting the essential words and actions which are its central point, she has been able in the course of centuries to order the words and actions which surround this central point as she pleases, and adapt it to the changing circumstances of time and place, of country, language and customs. Thus in the Mass as we have it now, she has introduced a certain interval of prayer and preparation between the words of consecration and the communion. It is thus, finally, that even after the communion she ventures to preserve the consecrated species. Her primary reason for this is to be able to feed her children apart from the time of Mass, if there be need ; but it is also that she may offer to this presence, as she has done for centuries, a cult which prolongs that of the Mass. This custom of reservation is as ancient as it is universal in the Church. It is fully justified by our faith in a permanent presence. It satisfies Our Lord's desire to remain always among us ; and gives to innumerable Christians a source of spiritual strength which is ever to hand. But we must not allow an unenlightened piety to dissociate the host reserved for adoration from the sacrifice it represents. The host in the tabernacle, in the monstrance, or carried in triumphal procession, is at all times the host of the Mass which is the host of the Supper, and this in turn is the host of the Cross. Above all it is a food, this bread and wine in which Christ placed at his last meal the power of his sacrifice, and it is this food we must eat if we would have life.

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## SUSANNA THE MARTYR

Catholics who have any acquaintance with modern Biblical studies are sure to have encountered the phrase *genera litteraria*, or its English equivalent 'literary forms,' and to know that great stress was laid on this subject in the Encyclical *Divino Afflante Spiritu*. But, if I may judge from my own experience, the implications of this theme are often not well grasped. I have heard a priest declare indignantly, when some historical passage of the Bible was being discussed, 'You can't apply *genera litteraria* here!' apparently understanding them as some technique for turning history into fiction. But literary forms are as inescapable as M. Jourdain's prose. You cannot put pen to paper without adopting some literary form. The style of a telegram is one, a letter to a friend uses another, letters to the Editor constitute a third, entries in a private diary make up a fourth, and so on. Similarly, you cannot peruse any piece of writing, without subconsciously at least determining its literary form and interpreting it accordingly. Your identification may of course be wrong—in which case your understanding of it is liable to be wrong too. The instructions of the Encyclical deal not with the existence of literary forms but with their recognition; in particular, they warn us against taking for granted that the literary forms used by the inspired writers are those with which we are familiar in modern literature and in our daily lives. Normally, the precise opposite is true.

In the seventeenth century the wrong identification of literary forms led to the misreading of poetic affirmations as scientific statements of fact. 'Terra autem in aeternum stat,' said Qoheleth (Eccles. 1:4); therefore the earth can't be spinning round the sun, concluded the theologians of the Holy Office. In the nineteenth century it wrought havoc with the interpretation of narrative sections of the Bible, which were practically all taken, unquestioningly, to be history of the kind we look for in modern historical textbooks. Yet that kind of 'strictly historical' writing is one literary form that is *not* to be found in the Bible. Scripture does contain much history; but it is always some variety of religious history, and its different kinds all depart in some measure, and some of them very widely, from the conventions of modern historical writing. Further, some of the narrative forms are not historical at all. Our Lord's parables in the New Testament furnish a good example, and this form at least has always been correctly understood. They are fiction, stories created to teach a lesson, and it would be an absurd misunderstanding, and a grave impoverishment

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of the divine message, to take, for example, the parable of the nobleman who went into a far country (Luke 19) as an historical account of Archelaus' journey to Rome.

The exaggerated fear of departing in the slightest from ' historicity ' was based on the perfectly sound Christian conviction that the Bible is essentially an historical (as well as prophetic) record, structured in the dimension of time. It is *Heilsgeschichte*, salvation-history, and its historical validity must not be weakened, under pain of nullifying the salvation. But it is no impeachment of that validity, to distinguish the forms in which the realities of the salvation-history are expressed. Besides the parables mentioned above, we must recognise another *genus* which adopts the narrative technique and was especially popular in the last centuries of the Old Testament period ; we may call it ' religious legend.' It is not, like a parable, pure invention ; it deals with the situation of Israel at a particular period in the past, and may introduce historical figures, in simplified or confused form. But its purpose is expressly didactic ; it aims, not at the factual recording of a single incident but at conveying the truth of the situation, what God's will was, how Gentiles and Israelites, faithful and unfaithful, reacted to it. Consequently, it implicitly (sometimes explicitly) exhorts the story-teller's contemporaries to glorify God's goodness and to imitate His faithful heroes. We shall never know, presumably, what individual events may have furnished starting-points for the traditions that grew into the stories of Esther, Judith, Tobias, or the first six chapters of Daniel. We can be quite sure that the inspired authors did not know, either. They were handling already traditional, legendary material, and they developed it freely to convey exactly what they wanted to convey : a teaching concerning the divine will and human response, in past and present.

In itself, the question whether a narrative is to be understood as a piece of eye-witness reporting or as a popular legend may be unimportant, from the religious point of view. Either of these forms may be divinely inspired, and both may express the same doctrine. But psychologically, it is easier for us to concentrate on the meaning of a story, when we realise that the author is deliberately shaping his material to convey a lesson. As an example I should like to discuss briefly the story of Susanna, which in Catholic Bibles appears as the thirteenth chapter of the Book of Daniel, and in the Roman liturgy is read at Mass on the fourth Saturday in Lent. Before *Divino Afflante Spiritu*, most Catholic commentators on this section apparently felt themselves obliged to uphold its strict ' historicity,' and by the same token had very little to say about its meaning. Protestant commentators usually leave it aside entirely, as ' apocryphal.' Popular

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interest, inspired by a not very wholesome instinct, has fixed on the temptation scene and found in it a titillating 'slice of life' (as in Renaissance paintings or in our modern theatre). The lover of the Bible must feel indignantly that such treatment is sheer profanation of the Word of God. Not the temptation but Susanna's conquest of it is the theme. The story deserves to be recognised and cherished for what it is : a lofty and inspiring example of a 'martyr-legend,' whose lesson is as valuable and cogent now as on the day it was published.

The *genus* of martyr-legends was a comparatively late development in the inspired literature. Martyrdom becomes a vital problem only in a time of persecution, and the first religious persecution in history (as distinct from mere political or social oppression) was the attempt by Antiochus IV to suppress Judaism in Palestine, in 168-165 B.C. It was then that the stories of Dan. 1-6 were collected and published. Of these, Chapters 1, 3 and 6 (the Jewish youths who refuse to eat unclean food, the three who refuse to adore Nabuchodonosor's statue, Daniel who refuses to desist from the worship of his God) are typical martyr-legends. The Susanna story, by its intrinsic character and also by its attachment to the book of Daniel, belongs to the same classification ; but its special characteristics make it a unique addition, and one may say that its absence from non-Catholic Bibles leaves their version of Daniel very much the poorer.

The origins of the story lie outside Israel : the themes of the unjustly accused wife, and of the 'wise young judge,' belong to eastern folklore. Its assumption into the patrimony of Israel meant in the first place its transformation into a religious story, in which the concepts of God and His Law provide the frame of reference by which the actions of the human characters are measured. In clear and simple language, with notable elevation of thought, the author portrays an ideal of moral conduct for the edification of his readers. We can easily discern the specifically religious traits in which the revealed religion of Israel is expressed. Susanna is described as a God-fearing woman. Her parents were just, and had carefully instructed their daughter in the Law of Moses. The villainy of her accusers is characterised as 'lawlessness' and is explained by their refusing to 'look towards heaven.' The heroine exposes herself to calumny and death rather than 'sin before the Lord.' She prays trustingly to the Lord, and He hearkens to her prayer. He brings about her deliverance, by 'stirring up' the 'holy spirit' which is in Daniel. The latter upbraids the wicked elders for breaking the Law, and for acting like Gentiles, not like Judeans. When the truth is disclosed the assembly praise God Who saves those that hope in Him. They deal with the guilty according to the Law of Moses. All these points certainly did not belong

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to any non-Israelite version of the story ; like much else in the Old Testament, they demonstrate how thoroughly the Israelites' religious consciousness transformed whatever material they took over from their pagan neighbours.

The crucial point in any story of martyrdom is the test, the cause for which the martyr gives his or her life. In Dan. 6 it is the duty of worshipping the one true God. In Dan. 3 it is the corollary of this, the duty of not offering worship to an idol. In Dan. 1, however, and in the martyr-legends of 2 Mac. 6 and 7, it is an apparently trivial matter, the abstaining from certain kinds of foods forbidden by the Law, as it was then interpreted. But of course the triviality is only apparent. God's will can be manifested in small things as in great, and we may compare the eating of a mouthful of pork to the dropping of a few grains of incense on the fire burning before a statue of Jove, the test for which so many Christian martyrs later gave their lives. In either case the external action is symbolic of a fundamental affirmation or denial. Similarly, the story of the Fall of Man in Gen. 2-3 turns on the prohibition of a certain food. In the Susanna story, however, the test is something that falls between the other two. It is not a question of cult or the worship of idols, but neither is it so arbitrary a thing as a dietary law. It is a grave point of morality, already existing in the natural law, sanctioned and made part of God's covenant by the Mosaic commandment : 'Thou shalt not commit adultery.' For this, Susanna is ready to sacrifice her life. She does not reason on her personal preferences, nor even on the injustice that would be done to her husband. She says, 'It is better for me to fall into your hands than to sin before the Lord.'

In the ancient traditions of Israel, there was a story which would immediately come to the mind of any reader, by way of comparison : that of the patriarch Joseph and Potiphar's wife (Gen. 39). There, a man is in a similar situation (except that the Law of Moses did not yet exist) and he makes the same choice, ultimately on religious grounds : 'How should I do such a great wrong as this, sinning against God ?' In each story, we see how emphatically and yet how naturally the hagiographer stresses the religious lesson. What might have been nothing but a novelistic intrigue, to be worked out in terms of human relationships, becomes under the influence of revealed doctrine an affirmation of the primary duty of faithfulness to God's will. This duty covers morals as well as faith. Therefore martyrdom, which ultimately is an act of the love of God above all created things, may have to defend any of the virtues, not only faith itself. This is strikingly demonstrated by another parallel to our story, this time a very modern one. In 1950 the Church canonised St Maria Goretti,

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a twelve-year old Italian girl, who had defended her chastity at the cost of her life on the explicit ground that to do otherwise would be 'a dreadful sin.' She is honoured by the Church as a Virgin Martyr, and her Mass is celebrated in red vestments.

The occasion for martyrdom of this type may arise—as in all the instances cited—without there being any general persecution. This brings us to another striking characteristic of the story of Susanna: the Gentiles do not appear in it at all. Her enemies, who threaten her with death if she will not forsake God's law, are almost literally those of her own household, fellow-Jews who are unfaithful to the covenant and rebellious to God's commandments. That there are two of them is explained by the need for two witnesses, to make the accusation legally valid. But that they should be elders and judges, therefore *ex officio* religious leaders and authorities in the community—this is astonishing. It suggests some background of conflict and criticism, to which we have now no clue. We can only note how remarkably this picture of wickedness in high places anticipates our Lord's attacks on the malice and hypocrisy of the Jewish authorities of his time. The fact that God's instrument of salvation is an unknown youth of no official standing attests a faith in the continued influence of His Spirit among His people, and shows how the expectation of a prophet, filled with the spirit of the Lord, was kept alive—to be answered eventually by the appearance of John the Baptist.

I have dwelt mainly on the figure of Susanna, because she is after all the central character and heroine of the story. Much more, in fact, could be said about her; but we must not forget Daniel, who has such an important part to play in the present canonical form of the text. This last phrase is important, because the story has been handed down to us in two forms, which differ considerably in details. The Church, in the second century A.D., adopted Theodotion's translation of the book of Daniel as official, abandoning the older Greek version known as the Septuagint. (Both texts of Chapters 13 and 14 will be found conveniently translated in Father Lattey's commentary in the Westminster Version.) The Susanna section in the Septuagint, though it records Daniel's name, shows distinct traces of an earlier stage of the story's editing, when the young hero was simply an anonymous Israelite youth. It was his identification with the Daniel of Dan. 1-6 that caused the story to be attached to the already existing twelve chapters of the book, and also caused the addition of the present final sentence (v. 64), which brings Daniel into equal prominence with Susanna as the subject of the narrative. In this approved version of Theodotion, Daniel appears as habitually gifted with a 'holy spirit,'

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which when 'stirred up' by God inspires him with the wisdom required to penetrate the true state of affairs. Before the cross-examination he already knows the elders' guilt, as is shown by the terms in which he addresses them: another touch by which the author stresses that Susanna's vindication comes not by human wisdom but by God's act in answer to her prayer.

Finally, a few words may be added to clarify the sacred authors' intentions in composing these inspiring stories of faithfulness unto death. In every one of the martyr-narratives in the book of Daniel, there is a miraculous or quasi-miraculous divine intervention, which frustrates the natural course of events and leads to the glorification of the martyrs and the manifestation of the truth. But in real life martyrs really die, and the innocent, like Susanna, are not usually vindicated by an inspired intervention. The sacred writers knew this just as well as we do, in fact they had before their eyes the many deaths of faithful Jews who refused to apostatise in the Seleucid persecution. It was precisely these people that they intended to encourage and console, by these stories of God's faithfulness in preserving His saints. Only, the preservation and vindication to be hoped for must be put off to 'the time appointed,' when all the sufferers would be gloriously raised from the dead, to enjoy everlasting life in the kingdom of the saints (Dan. 12:1-3). In other words, the miraculous preservations of the martyrs in these stories are intended as symbols of the reward promised to real-life martyrs, who give themselves to death with unwavering fidelity and love. That the early Church thoroughly understood this teaching is shown by the many paintings in the catacombs of the three youths in the fiery furnace, of Daniel in the lions' den, of Susanna accused by the elders. They are symbols and pledges of the resurrection from the dead.

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## APROPOS FOUR RECENT BOOKS ON THE SCROLLS

Millar Burrows, *The Dead Sea Scrolls*, Secker and Warburg, 1956. Pp. 436. 30s.  
Charles T. Fritsch, *The Qumran Community*, Macmillan, 1956. Pp. 147. 23s.  
Geoffrey Graystone, *The Dead Sea Scrolls and the Originality of Christ*, Sheed and Ward, 1956. Pp. 119. 8s. 6d.  
John M. Allegro, *The Dead Sea Scrolls*, Pelican, 1956. Pp. 208. 3s. 6d.

IN spite of Père de Vaux's plaintive remark that the Qumran manuscripts were not found (I quote him *ad sensum*) by frogmen, it seems that the title 'Dead Sea Scrolls' is setting up house in English-speaking countries. Only one of our four books declines it and its sales, no doubt, will suffer for its honourable fastidiousness. We may say at once that all four are well worth having. But it is the business of the honest reviewer to put himself in his reader's place—I mean to enter into his purse, time, mind—and from there to contemplate his policy.

Millar Burrows with his four hundred and thirty-five pages and his fee of thirty shillings is a man of proved scholarship and of sound judgment. He is probably the most qualified of all the four to write on this subject. He alone offers a translation of the published non-Biblical texts and this of itself is enough to commend his book beyond all the others. It would have been better still if, as in Vermès,<sup>1</sup> explanatory footnotes had accompanied the text. Nevertheless, the text is there and its absence from the other three is a thousand pities since it leaves the reader at the mercy of the author's selection and interpretation. One comes away from Allegro and (pardonably, considering his scope) from Graystone with the impression that the non-Biblical manuscripts of Qumran are a tissue of New Testament approximations; one reaches the last line of the sixty-page Qumran text in Burrows wondering what all the excitement is about. This second reaction is without doubt excessive, and we shall return to this later, but it is not unhealthy. At least, it helps us to appreciate the sobriety of Burrows' conclusion :

I must confess that after studying *The Dead Sea Scrolls* for seven years I do not find my understanding of the New Testament substantially affected. Its Jewish background is clearer and better understood, but its meaning has neither been changed nor significantly clarified (p. 343).

<sup>1</sup> Géza Vermès, *Les Manuscrits du Désert de Juda*, Desclée, 1954. We hope it is not disorderly to express a preference for this book over the four under review.

Though we may qualify this judgment we should not do well to forget it ; it is the judgment of a scholar. But if we may return to our point, defying boredom, we earnestly plead that no future book—I mean *popular* book—be published without an annotated translation of the principal non-Biblical manuscripts. As well, and much better, have a gospel commentary without text, for at least the gospel text is easily available.

The smaller work by Charles Fritsch is similarly marked by a conscientious, unpartisan presentation of the main facts and by a prudent reserve without which discussion on a topic of such moment would be mischievous. He and Burrows are of the *Il Penseroso* school. There is nothing here to compare with the verve of Allegro who has all the enthusiasm and dash of one actually engaged in the exciting, if wearying, business of decipherment. The defects of those qualities can only be amiable when the whole book is so attractive and fresh. It foregoes the arid presentation of rival views, alas so necessary, that characterises the work of Burrows. It cheerfully adopts a hypothesis and excitedly goes through with it : 'it seems' on one page becomes 'we have seen' on another<sup>1</sup> and the reader runs breathless but eager behind. From Muhammad Adh-Dhib's (somewhat doubtful) goat to the last sweeping conclusion (which may be an understatement) that Christianity has given 'the basic elements of (Qumran's) faith a far wider setting' we are gripped by the zeal of the hunt. We may gallop too heartily, of course. Thus, it may be that the famous Teacher of Righteousness (as yet, according to Burrows, unidentifiable) was of the period of Alexander Jannaeus ; it may be that he was behind the attack on Alexander ; it may be that he claimed the title of priestly Messiah at this time ; it may be that he met his end by crucifixion (only one more added to the eight hundred crucified enemies of Jannaeus) but a sorites in hypotheticals does not quite vindicate a conclusion in this form :

One might surmise that the Sectarians had particular cause to recall this (crucifying) activity of Jannaeus since their Master had suffered the same cruel death (p. 100).

The range of 'one might surmise' may appear doubtful here (or should we understand 'if' for 'since'?), but one suspects that it was precisely this sort of ambiguity which helped to blow up the storm after Mr Allegro's original broadcast. But this is only an example and a warning : at this stage, after all, hypotheses must be made

<sup>1</sup> Compare pp. 96 and 148 on the identity of the 'Lion of Wrath'

and the intelligent reader must be left to recognise them for himself. Allegro's book is first-rate and would be cheap at three times the price.

As an antidote, if needed, to the slight acidity of Allegro we commend Graystone. These two together will cost you twelve shillings and you will read them ; Burrows you may not ; though we must repeat the mournful truth that you will still lack the texts of Qumran. Father Graystone sets out to silence that too happily alliterate catch-phrase : 'Qumran the cradle of Christianity.' And he does it well. His task is not easy : counter-argument on the conservative side (and possibly Father Graystone is a little too cautious) is never as exciting as the first impetuous charge from new and unforeseen positions. Very justly he points out that affinity of thought and expression between Qumran and the New Testament is due, in large measure, to common ancestry—the Old Testament. Perhaps he does a little less than justice to the influence of the 'inter-testamental' period lest he appear to compromise the 'originality' of Christ (a convenient but dangerously vague term to which we shall have to return). But why draw the line at the Old Testament ? Even if we are thinking in terms of time—which we are not—it might be well to remember that the two books of Maccabees belong to Qumran's period. If we are thinking—as we are—in terms of the Spirit's activity, we should avoid setting arbitrary limits : the gift of the Spirit is not confined to *Scriptural* inspiration. If Caiaphas could speak 'not of himself' (John 11:51) but with the deep unheeded meaning of the Spirit, what of the most pious in Israel—of Essenism, of Qumran ? The Word-made-flesh is not the beginning of revelation (it was the Word that was in the beginning) but its climax. We say all this not to settle a matter of fact (this must be done by a dispassionate comparison of Qumran and New Testament texts) but to declare a point of principle. Let us *suppose*, for instance, that Qumran associates the idea of suffering—even of the Isaian Suffering Servant—with the Messianic hope : what is this but a great and truly Biblical advance beyond the popular Davidic conception ? And has the Spirit nothing to do with it ? And if Our Lord took over the Qumran ideal—though with Jeremiah and Job and Second Isaiah before him he did not need to—and approved and lived it, we should not be surprised.

It must be confessed that with the discussion in its present stage the Christian apologete may be tempted to irritability. It is natural. The air, the popular air that is, is full of uninformed and unformed objections like buzzing, invisible flies. Straight language, he feels,

should be used in this serious matter and facile metaphor ('cradle of Christianity') is no good substitute. If we are to have allegations at this unsuitable stage (he says to himself), let them be clearly made. If the charge is that Christ adds nothing to Qumran, let it be uttered; it will ring hollow enough. If the charge is that Christ had much in common with a community of devout Jews dedicated to poverty and perfection, who need gainsay it? If the charge is that he borrowed from Qumran the best it had to offer, why, we already knew that 'he grew in wisdom and age' and therefore in experience. All this is very true. It is also very defensive. And yet there is material for positive argument if we are not too distracted to look for it. So, for example, to minimise the relationship between the Johannine writings and Qumran is a defensive measure. I am not for a moment suggesting that Father Graystone does so for this reason, but one feels that a Catholic Johannine specialist should be heard on the point: 'It seems to me,' writes Père Boismard,<sup>1</sup> 'that the Johannine dualism of world subjected to God and world subjected to Satan, of light and darkness, etc. can hardly be explained except in function of (*en référence à*) Qumran theology.' What follows? Burrows, Fritsch and Allegro faithfully note it (I quote Allegro): 'No longer can John be regarded as the most Hellenistic of the evangelists . . . the whole framework of his thought is seen now to spring directly from a Jewish sectarianism rooted in Palestinian soil and his material recognised as founded in the earliest layers of gospel tradition.' Here is a change indeed in the world of scholarship! The Rylands Papyrus helped to situate the fourth gospel in time and now the Qumran manuscripts are taking it from its supposed Hellenistic thought-world and placing it firmly in the Semitic. What further? If this primitive Semitic Gospel is, as it most surely is, pervaded by the divinity of Christ, what becomes of Allegro's own insinuation (pp. 161-2) that Paul has intruded his own Christology on the gospel? So, too, we might follow up the indications of a ritual meal, with bread and wine, at Qumran, to ask whether pagan models were needed (this has been frequently alleged) to transform our Lord's Last Supper into a ritual meal. In short, by new discoveries we have everything to gain if we are patient—and we trust others will be patient too.

Finally, since we have taxed others with vagueness, let us try to clear our own minds. What is meant by the 'originality' of Christ? In this context we are plainly not speaking of the theological uniqueness of his person and of his efficacious redemptive work. The 'originality' of Christ here evidently refers to his historically verifiable preaching. Now of our Lord's moral aphorisms it has been said that no single

<sup>1</sup> *Revue Biblique*, 1956, p. 268

one of them cannot be paralleled, and often verbally paralleled, in rabbinic literature—and it would be rash to allege rabbinic dependence on Jesus. The originality lies not in these moral maxims but in all that lies behind them. Christ was not crucified for being a rabbi of the rabbis but for some bolder claim. It is not enough to say, with Allegro, that Jesus and the Qumran sectaries have this in common: the sense of impending climax. The whole of the New Testament, not one passage here or there, drives home the central truth that Jesus himself *is* the climax. It is his exorcisms that show that the Kingdom has come, it is he who sees Lucifer falling from heaven, the Law and the Prophets were until John but with Jesus it is the time of the kingdom. It is this confident awareness of himself that lies behind all his moral demands with their authority and urgency and behind the assured conviction that his offer is unprecedented and unrepeatable: who does not gather with him scatters. In other words, 'the Christology lies behind the aphorisms, not ahead of them; this means that at no point is the literary or historical critic able to detect in any stratum of the synoptic material evidence that a Christological interpretation has been imposed upon an un-Christological history.'<sup>1</sup> If the teaching of Christ may be matched elsewhere in part and in detail it remains, in its ensemble and with the unique Christology that inspires and sustains it, an unrivalled body of teaching which is an objective and verifiable fact. In this it is 'original.' With it not even the whole rabbinic corpus has anything to compare—and certainly not the 'deep devotion, high hopes and pathetic aberrations' of Qumran. This is the true perspective which may have been, may still be, distorted in the present excitement. Within that perspective we may read with less disappointment the rather negative conclusion of Burrows: 'Perhaps the best thing the Dead Sea Scrolls can do for us is to make us appreciate our Bible all the more by contrast.'

Now all this—the matter and manner of Christ's teaching in itself and as compared with that of others, of Qumran, for example—is the concern of the critical historian. He is not, however, professionally interested in the ultimate truth or falsehood of that teaching. In so far as this last is previous to human reasoning it is the business of the historical philosopher: it is for him to contemplate the ruins and oblivion of Qumran and to contrast these with the enduring phenomenon of dynamic Christianity (which, in its turn, is only partially appreciable by the historical philosopher as such). He will then pronounce judgment upon the original worth of the two compared

<sup>1</sup> Hoskyns and Davey, *The Riddle of the New Testament*, 1931, p. 145. One feels that Mr Allegro has more than once ignored certain conclusions like this which are based on sound Gospel criticism.

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institutions, the dead and the living. This judgment will be still more valuable (other things being equal) if our philosopher has personally felt the dynamism of Christianity, for then he better understands one of the terms of his comparison.<sup>1</sup> Acceptance of this judgment is not, needless to say, an act of theological faith but an acquiescence of human reason. Nevertheless, it prepares for that faith—which, we must never forget, is a supernatural gift of God—and demonstrates that the act, when made, is not blind but a prudent human act made in accordance with right reason. By the act of theological faith itself we believe that Christ's truth is not merely superior to all that is most precious in Qumran but is itself an ultimate and an absolute.

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<sup>1</sup> This against the allegation, which has been made once or twice, that those 'with religious commitments' are dangerous guides in this Qumran affair. The accusation must surely be directed against such judgments as we are speaking of: no-one, it is hoped, would care to impugn the scholarly integrity of the Catholic priests who are actually working on the decipherment of the Scrolls.

## BOOK REVIEWS

Robert Graves and Joshua Podro, *The Nazarene Gospel Restored*, Cassell, 1953. 63s.

In 1798 the Reverend Richard Graves, Junior Fellow of Trinity College, Dublin, produced a learned work to show that the evangelists were not enthusiasts, hoping to protect the studious youth of the Church of Ireland against both the unbelieving rationalist and the 'over-warm and indiscreet Christian' alike.<sup>1</sup> Now Robert Graves, with the help of Mr Podro, a Jewish refugee from Central Europe, tries to undo the work of one who was very probably his forbear by arguing that the evangelists were unfaithful chroniclers, being led astray by partisanship for that wicked man Paul, who, of course, distorted the Christian message. Marcion it was who set the example to all Christian heretics by making his own selection from the contents of the New Testament before embarking on the task of presenting an entirely new version of Christianity. Mr Graves, a new Marcion, has done his work on the grand scale, and has recently claimed that his work cost him £3,000, a sum which would scarcely be repaid by the sale of the 4,000 copies which he says were sold in Britain and the U.S.A.

The method followed is to print out a section of the gospel with its parallel passages, to discuss how much of it is interpolation and what has been omitted by the 'enthusiasts' from the original narrative, and then to print the reconstructed text at the end of the discussion. The argumentation is full of *a priori* and question-begging and one grows weary of the phrase: 'Jesus must have done' this or that, or 'could not have done' what the texts say he did, while it is confidently stated that the editors 'will have suppressed' what Mr Graves thinks the gospels should contain. Thus at the healing of the man with palsy, 'the scribes would have protested energetically if Jesus had taken upon himself to forgive any man's sins' (p. 277), and so, says Mr Graves: 'We must conclude that he did not. Apparently in the original tradition the palsied man's friends were disappointed with Jesus' prayer for his spiritual, rather than his bodily, health; and he then quoted 2 Chronicles 7:12-14 to prove that bodily health depended on God's forgiveness of sin.' Then the passage is reconstructed to work in the O.T. citation and to remove the forgiveness of sins. Nor is this all. This 'conclusion' is made the ground for an assertion

<sup>1</sup> *An Essay on the Character of the Apostles and Evangelists*

that: 'Jesus had no right to forgive sins against other men or against God; he could only forgive wrongs done to himself' (p. 137). Hence it is inferred by an enormous leap that Jesus cannot have forgiven the sins of the woman at the house of Simon but only wrongs she had done to him personally. If she had wronged him personally, she must have been his wife. Other 'arguments' are offered for the same conclusion, but what I have set down is typical. Clement of Alexandria can be cited elsewhere (p. 209) when he says something that is to Mr Grave's purpose, but his explicit statement (*Stromata* 3, 6, 49) that Christ was unmarried is not heeded in this fantasia.

As one might expect in a book of this nature the Virgin birth is denied, appeal being made to the text of *syrsin* at Matt. 1:16, which reads: 'Joseph, to whom was espoused the Virgin Mary, begat Jesus who is called the Christ.' Mr Graves tells us that the original text of Matt. 1:16 is 'quoted in the *Dialogue of Timothy and Aquila* and confirmed by the Sinaitic Syriac text . . . ; by almost precisely the same reading in the Vatican *Diatessaron*; by Peter's testimony (Acts 2:30) that Jesus was 'of the fruit of David's loins according to the flesh'; finally by Irenaeus' statement (*Heresies* III. 21:1) that 'the Ebionites (i.e. poor Nazarenes) considered Jesus to have been the son of Joseph.' This looks to be a formidable parade of learned support, but it should be said at once that the passage in the *Dialogue of Timothy and Aquila* where the offending phrase occurs is not a quotation of the gospel, but is spoken by the Jew in the dialogue who is seeking information about Christ, not by his Christian instructor, and that the ordinary text of Matt. 1:16 is found twice elsewhere in the dialogue. The Sinaitic codex of the Syriac presents a reading which is also found in the Ferrar group of Greek MSS and in some of the Old Latin which have the words: *Joseph cui despontata virgo Maria genuit Iesum*. Years ago Burkitt discussed this reading at great length,<sup>1</sup> concluding that the reading was a 'Western' deviation from an earlier Greek text which had the normal and orthodox reading. Burkitt added: 'Whatever our decision be, the question is only a matter of literary criticism, not of historical fact.' He held, and with reason, that Matthew was anxious to show that Joseph accepted Jesus as his son, thereby establishing *legal* parentage and a *legal* descent from David, which was all that mattered. A glance at the Old Latin cited above will show how ambiguous the phrase is, with the subject of *genuit* left vague. The Greek of the Ferrar group is equally ambiguous, and it is easy to see how the Syriac version could thus come to adopt the wrong alternative at the point of ambiguity. The Vatican *Diatessaron* is an Arabic codex which has likewise blundered in rendering an orthodox Syriac ms,

<sup>1</sup> *Evangelion Da-Mepharreshe*, vol. 2, pp. 258-66

and it is by no means the only witness to Tatian's work, though it is the only one to carry this strange reading. Peter's citation of Psalm 132:11 in Acts is no more than a passing reference to Christ's Davidic descent, the physical aspect of which was not necessary to Peter's argument.

There remains the assertion of the Nazarenes, as given by Irenaeus, and it is better to give this in full; Irenaeus says:

Theodotion of Ephesus and Aquila of Pontus, both Jewish proselytes, translate: Behold a young woman shall conceive and shall bear a son. The Ebionites follow them and say that Jesus was begotten by Joseph.

Far from being the primitive version of the gospel at this point, the theory adopted by Mr Graves goes back to Jewish authors, and the Nazarenes, who championed it, were not the original followers of Christ but contemporaries of Irenaeus at the end of the second century.

One gains some insight into the degree of scholarship that has been brought to bear on the making of this book by examining what it has to say about the Last Supper. This was not a paschal meal, says Mr Graves, or at least it is unlikely that Jesus ate the Pasch (pp. 656 and 665). To rebut contrary opinions he examines the theory of Chwolson, that was made public in 1892, quietly ignoring the fact that in the careful study of Joachim Jeremias<sup>1</sup> there is a bibliography of two and a half closely printed pages of names of those who hold that the Last Supper *was* a Pasch (for all kinds of reasons unknown to Chwolson), almost all of whom have written since 1892. To ignore the immense amount of scholarly work that has been done on the problem may be the gesture of a brilliant amateur, but it does not inspire confidence. The only new point Mr Graves brings up is the rule (*Pesachim* 7:13) that no-one should go out while the Pasch was being eaten. This, he thinks, coupled with the gospel account of Judas' exit, rules out the Pasch. But the custom (in *Jerusalem Talmud*, *Pesachim* 7:13) is only concerned with the actual eating of the lamb, for the case of conscience there put, asking what is to happen if the roof begins to fall in during the meal, is solved on that supposition. Now Judas went out (John 13:27-30) after he had taken the morsel—whatever it was—and even, according to Luke, in the present order of his text (22:21-3), after the Eucharist, which followed the meal, had been completed. If the supper was a Pasch, it is clear that the eating of the lamb is finished long before Judas departs, and such a departure was not forbidden by Jewish law, as one can see from the *Babylonian Talmud* (*Pesachim* 86 b) 'The members of a company (for the Pasch) enter three at a time, and depart even singly.'

<sup>1</sup> *The Eucharistic Words of Jesus*, Oxford 1955

The plot which Mr Graves thinks must be at the source of the Passion narratives in the gospels is quite simply this: that Christ wanted to enact for his apostles the story of the foolish shepherd as foretold in the prophecy of Zacharias (11:15-17 and 13:7-9), even to the extreme of inciting them to kill him. It is true that Jesus quotes Zach. 13:7: 'Strike the shepherd, and the sheep of the flock will be scattered,' in Matt. 26:31 and Mark 14:27, while allusion is made to the words in John 16:32, and in the *Epistle of Barnabas* 5:12. The prophecy of the foolish shepherd is referred by the Fathers to Anti-christ,<sup>1</sup> and it does not seem possible that Christ should have been taking all its details upon himself. Mr Graves is debarred from seeing this, as he thinks that Christ's assumption of the title 'the Good Shepherd,' as recounted in John 10, cannot be authentic, since Christ had said that no-one was to be called good (Mark 10:18). It should be obvious that God is good in a sense far surpassing any that can be applied to men, and the fact that here Christ reserves the one to God should not make us think that he could not assume for his manhood that same adjective in its lesser sense. To deny this would be to reject the analogy of being, and it would be also to ignore the very extreme way the Jews had of talking. When Christ said: 'I wish for mercy and not sacrifice,' he did not forbid sacrifice, but showed a preference. So here: God is good in a sense far higher than that word would carry when applied to men.

Modern Catholic commentators<sup>2</sup> who deal with the passage from Zacharias about the foolish shepherd say that it is used in an accommodated sense by Christ in Matt. 26:31. Cardinal Wiseman has dealt with this difficulty in general terms,<sup>3</sup> showing that the phrases, 'It is written,' and 'that the Scripture might be fulfilled,' were used for accommodating Scriptural phrases to individuals to whom the writers could not possibly have believed them primarily or originally to refer. This rabbinical use of Scripture could be expected in this place also. But one could, if one wanted, say that the phrase is used in more than a merely accommodated sense. Then it might be suggested that the prophecy of the foolish shepherd refers primarily to the antichrist who is to come, but that one feature of it, that is embodied in this phrase, was somehow verified by anticipation in the case of Christ himself, it being granted that there will be some resemblance in externals between antichrist, when he comes, and Christ, for

<sup>1</sup> See Cyril of Alexandria, PG 72:200, or Jerome, PL 25:1507 for representative opinions

<sup>2</sup> e.g. S. Bullough O.P., in *A Catholic Commentary on Holy Scripture*, Edinburgh 1953, sect. 551j

<sup>3</sup> *Lectures on Science and Religion*, vol. 2, pp. 209-13, a passage to which Fr. E. Sutcliffe S.J. has called my attention

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otherwise the deception that antichrist is to practise would be impossible.

It will be seen that the book of Mr Graves is one that cannot be recommended to Catholics unless they are prepared to undertake the very considerable labour of verifying its sources and weighing its arguments. Mr Graves has expressed the hope that he will one day find a place in the footnotes to theological treatises. That may be, but in the meantime it will be necessary for him to write a work like that of the Reverend Richard Graves, to prove that he is not an enthusiast.

J. H. CREHAN, S.J.

Maisie Ward, *They Saw His Glory*. An Introduction to the Gospels and Acts. Sheed and Ward, London 1956. Pp. 278. 16s.

To introduce something is to draw attention to it. In this book Maisie Ward sets before us a display of New Testament treasures. She is like a guide pointing out what to look for and where to find it, and when the task is over we are left to study again and appreciate the gospel truths with refurbished interest.

She gives a sketch of each evangelist and then touches upon the main doctrines and special features of their work. There is no dry conventional 'text-book stuff' here. The gospel teaching is made colourful and living and real. Christ is made to stand out as human but, with all his humanity, Divine. I soon gave up trying to mark passages of special merit, they occurred too frequently: the 'Hidden King' in Matthew; finding Peter through following Mark's purposeful use of tenses; the competent handling of the difficult eschatological discourse; the place of the Holy Spirit in Luke and so on. Outstanding is Miss Ward's treatment of the fourth gospel. In his recent commentary on St John, C. K. Barrett, writing about the first verse says 'John intends that the whole of his gospel shall be read in the light of this verse. The deeds and words of Jesus are the words and deeds of God; if this be not true the book is blasphemous.' Such should be our approach to St John and I know of no better treatment of the 'Word,' the Logos, than Miss Ward's; a masterpiece of brevity, accuracy and completeness.

Today every educated Catholic ought to be able to give a reasoned defence of the trustworthiness of the gospels. How few of us can do so with confidence and competence. Her arguments reflect her full acquaintance with the best up-to-date scholarship, though I thought she might have made use of the evidence of the Rylands Papyrus in this respect.

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This book should find a place in every sixth-form Scripture and Apologetics class ; the apposite passage read in conjunction with the gospel text would help to make the class the joy it should be. The students would make surprising discoveries about Our Lord and his way of life for us. Scripture would be seen as a living guide to 'life' and not as a mere subject for the G.C.E.

The only criticism I would make is that it lacks an index. How frequently this is the case with Catholic books. As I was starting to read the book a priest asked me if I had noticed the excellent quotation from Père Prat about Our Lord's knowledge. I turned back to find the index ! I did eventually find the reference ; it is on page 146. There are two interesting references to the Temple (pp. 89 and 121) and the only way of finding them quickly is by memorising or referring to a card index. Surely Miss Ward has sufficient confidence in the value of her work to see it as a reference book, a godsend to C.E.G., students and clergy alike.

RICHARD J. FOSTER

H. H. Rowley, *The Faith of Israel*. SCM Press, London 1956. Pp. 220. 18s.

This valuable contribution to Biblical theology is a collection of lectures on the following aspects of Old Testament thought : revelation and its media, the nature of God, the nature and need of man, individual and community, the good life, death and beyond, and the day of the Lord. Mr Rowley is justly recognised as a most reliable scholar who succeeds in presenting the fruits of his scholarship in a way easily understood by those who have had no technical training ; he is always concerned to emphasise the theological teaching of the Old Testament, and always displays a rare balance of judgment. His books are therefore always to be recommended most highly, and the present volume is no exception. Readers will find all these essays both interesting and stimulating, and the abundant bibliographical notes, an admirable feature of all Mr Rowley's work, are a valuable aid to further study.

T. WORDEN

